

THE A. AND M. COLLEGE.

CLOSING EXERCISES OF ITS FIRST PROSPEROUS YEAR.

A Large Attendance at the College Chapel—The Boys Acquit Themselves With Credit—Mr. H. E. Fries' Address—Other Talks.

Yesterday morning quite a company assembled at the Agricultural and Mechanical College to be present at the exercises of the close of the first session of its useful, honorable, prosperous and hopeful career. Among the number was a large gathering of ladies.

The exercises were opened with prayer by Rev. J. J. Hall, D. D., pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle.

Mr. A. G. Smith, a Freshman of the College, then discussed "The A. & M. College, from a Freshman's Standpoint." He inveighed against the cultivation of cotton exclusively, and believed that the farmer ought to raise better stock. He showed how the A. & M. College would help a man to be a more successful and useful farmer and artisan, and was loudly applauded.

The same subject was also handled by Mr. S. E. Ashbury, a Freshman of Burke county. He declared that he had chosen the vocation of farming because he thought he had a talent for it, and because he preferred to be at the foot of the ladder, if it rested upon God's work. "Why," said he, "should a man wear his life away feeding a machine, when he can live on a farm and enjoy sweet communion with nature and nature's God every day?" He made a bright, earnest, original speech.

Mr. Fries' Address.

After a pleasant opening Mr. Fries stated that just fifty years ago, in 1840, his father started business as a young man without means, without a thorough mechanical training, without friends who could advise him in his departure from old methods, but with a high regard for the possible future of manufacturing in North Carolina; for fifty years that manufacturing business has continued, without interruption, and will be continued, as the most appropriate monument to his memory; and the fact that his life was shortened by overcoming great obstacles. This was a happy allusion, and at once put the earnest, studious boys in rapport with Mr. Fries, and convinced them of his deep interest in the work they are seeking to learn to accomplish. He traced the beginnings of the A. & M. College, and found them in the Boston Exposition, the State Exposition, the New Orleans Exposition.

This College is being weighed in the balance and it must not be found wanting. It is not the Farmers' College—it is not the Mechanics' College—it is the property of the people of North Carolina. He then touched upon the development of the resources of the State. People are taking more interest in education than ever before, and there is more charity manifested by rival institutions. They are all young. They have outlived the depression caused by the war, though thousands upon thousands who would now be our leaders in thought, in industrial development and politics, gave their lives for the defense of their country. Continues, Mr. Fries said:

A friend was relating a few days ago the incidents of his visit to Richmond at the unveiling of the Lee monument. He says he was reading over the list of the killed, and a familiar name attracted his attention—he stopped, and for awhile thought of that proud form—a young man of wonderful development and manly beauty—a gunner who loved his gun and refused to become an officer, although promotion was frequently tendered him. The friend says the last time he saw the gunner he asked him why he did not accept the higher positions. The young man placed his hand on his gun and said: "I love this gun. Only a few days ago my officer came to me and said: 'Do you see that pontoon bridge used by the enemy in their retreat? I want you to cut it to pieces.' My reply was that I would do it if I could secure my range before it became too dark. I placed my gun in position, I secured the range, and when it became too dark to see the exact spot hit by my shell, I knew my work was effective by the crashing and flying of timbers. Do you think, sir, I would become an officer when I can do work like that?" My friend further said the habit of his friend was to discharge his gun, then mount the breastworks and see whether or not he had properly done his work—if so, with a triumphant shout he would jump down to resume his labors. It was in this way he lost his life, upon the breastworks, with his face to the enemy. My purpose has not been to renew the memories of the terrible past, but to draw from them lessons for the future. It is impossible for all the students of this college to become successful farmers or mechanics or manufacturers. God has not so ordained it—but there is a work for each and every one of us, and if we do our part full well, "there all the honor lies."

And now, upon the supposition that we have all resolved to do our part in the upbuilding of our State, it becomes with such a personal question as to his individual work and the best preparation for the same.

Most young men who decide upon a mechanical course seem to think that a very limited amount of education is necessary—in reality, many go directly into shops or factories without any preparation. As a result, we see in our State a large preponderance of men who do not, and can not, command good wages. They do their work because they are told to do it, not because they understand the reasons for it. If you will study a complicated machine you will find that every part of that machine is essential to its proper work, and no man can successfully operate that machine and procure from it its full capacity of usefulness unless he understands the principal upon which it operates. Again most farmers are farmers, by observation, within a limited sphere—they do this thing or that thing because their neighbors did so, and secured good results, they do not think that the condition and fertility of their soil may differ from that of their neighbors, and hence their results may differ. The truth is, many do not think.

I trust the day will come in our State when a student of the A. & M. College will complete his education at the University, or some other of our colleges—and when a student from the University or other colleges will complete his education by a thorough course at the A. & M. College.

The old German idea that every boy

should learn a trade was a most excellent one, and we need not go far to see living examples of this idea. Every community furnishes examples of prominent and influential citizens who are blessed with vigor of mind and body, and who spent the early years of their life at hard work on the farm, while prosecuting their studies.

The result is clearly seen. Not only do these men know their peculiar branch of business but they are in a position to sympathize with their fellow-men, for they, as boys, were versed in the same line of pursuits. Show me a crank and I will show you a man whose mind has been developed in one line to the detriment of all others.

Show me a well rounded man and I will show you a man whose life has been a succession of efforts in various fields, and who by application has mastered each position before he advanced to a higher field of usefulness.

The men in North Carolina now in prominent positions are men who have obtained them by persistent and faithful efforts. Do you ever note the progress of some of the boys on the railroad? Watch them, as news-boys, and if they are faithful, in a few years they hold higher and more responsible positions, and from them we will doubtless, in future, have the passenger and traffic managers; if these same boys could first take a course in our college, might they not be more efficient in their work, and receive their promotion more rapidly?

Think then of the many bright boys seen on our farms who by frugality and economy accumulate some means; they meet the expectation of their friends? Ought they not to have done better? Are they well rounded men? Watch them with care and see how often they wish for a more liberal education, a more thorough knowledge of men, a more extended field of usefulness and influence, and that their children may enjoy these things, they send them to school and to college.

Let us consider for a moment the preparation of a professional man—a doctor or a lawyer. He takes a college course, then a course of law or medicine—having procured his license he offers his services to the public. The universal statement is—"If you want to lose your case, or your life—give it to that man." It is generally conceded that until a lawyer or a doctor can prove himself worthy of confidence he has to live on "short rations." If he proves himself worthy his name and future are steadily built up.

How is it with the mechanic or farmer? At the age of 16 or 18 he works at \$6.00 or \$8.00 per month, by the time he is 21—a good mechanic may earn \$1.00 per day, while the best among farm laborers can be had for \$15.00 per month and board.

The work required of the mechanic is monotonous in its character—the same class of work from day to day—the sawing of weather boards, the nailing on of shingles, the flooring of store rooms or dwellings, and the erection of cheap houses, made slightly by the painters brush and his ever present putty.

Should the work be in iron, it may not be as noticeable but more annoying from the rattle and clatter of loose-jointed vehicles and inferior locks and hinges about our dwellings.

The farm laborer does not expect to do more than he is told to do—the plowing and hoeing and feeding is too often done to the detriment of the crop and the stock, and financial loss to the owner. The homes of such laborers are models of inconvenience, no thought is expended for the convenience of the wife and but little regard paid to the existence of children and the wages of these were never increased.

Can the A. & M. College improve these things? If she does not, she fails in her mission. The student who goes forth to work must, like the professional man, prove his fitness; unless he disappoints the expectations of his friends, he should command, within two years after his graduation, at least, \$1.50 or \$2.00 per day; he should at least be foreman of a squad of hands, and thereby be in a position to make himself invaluable to his employer. It is from this class of men that we most frequently find contractors, men of comfortable homes, happy and contented families, with a salary sufficient to supply more than the necessities of life, and a possibility of "paying back at an early date," funds borrowed to secure the A. & M. College course.

The same is true as to the farmer. We need men on the farms who can intelligently now and reap, feed the stock, attend to the dairy, keep in repair drills and reapers and mowers, and harrows and sulky plows, horse-mowers and threshers; men who know how to prune trees and cultivate vegetables for our own and Northern markets; men not afraid of work; men not too lazy to study and devise ways and means to make farming pay. Such labor will demand from 60 to 100 per cent. more wages than is now paid. It has always been the earnest wish of the friends of this college that it would put our people to thinking more of the great advantages at their very doors.

I learned a few days ago that a Northern man came to Trinity College for his health; he is improving and is delighted. He has invested and endeavors to make his town lot valuable. He bought a cow, which proved to be a good one. He cleared off weeds and planted strawberries. He offered strawberries and cream to the people of the village one or two evenings in each week, and from that source made \$50 this season. From the same garden the former owner never raised berries enough for his own use, but he did produce an abundant and luxuriant crop of weeds.

Insurance men tell us that the value of our services in behalf of our families is determined by the amount we are able to make by way of support and competency. Let us examine a moment. The laborer who earns \$4.50 per week for 52 weeks in the year, represents nearly \$4,000 at 64 interest. Every man who earns \$9 per week represents double that amount, and a man represents such values annually to his family, what must his labor and influence represent to his State? We can estimate the loss this State has sustained by immigration to the North-west! What can we do to keep the young men at home? In my humble judgment, no one thing will do more to encourage and satisfy our boys and young men, than to do our utmost in all parts of the State to make work knowledge.

I claim this College is doing that very thing, and that the productive labor of students will be doubled by a course here. We are laboring to make this college work attractive to all classes of society, and I trust it will become a ne-

cessity to every educated man in the State. We want to educate mill owners as well as master mechanics. We want to educate Rail-Road Superintendents, as well as master builders and engineers. We want to turn out men who will become lawyers, and doctors and preachers and who will point with pride to their Alma Mater, as a contributor to their mental and physical training. (I mention the professions for many young men will doubtless drift into different channels, after they leave these halls.) We want to educate land owners as well as farm superintendents and laborers. We want to educate men to take hold whenever duty calls, like the brave gunner boy will stick to their guns. We are going to make this college a place to which land owners, farmers, manufacturers, engineers, miners and railroad men will come when they want intelligent labor. It is a cause of much gratification to see the great and increasing revival of State pride. It has not always been so. We have often-times been too ready to give to our sister States honors that belong to us. The State owes a debt of gratitude to Judge Schenck, Col. Waddell and Col. Burgwyn for their recent utterances in behalf of our State and our people.

In this connection it is interesting to note that as early as 1754 North Carolina allowed Virginia to reap the result of her labors. Among documents in the archives of the Moravian church in Salem, we find the following, concerning the farm products of that day and also concerning mechanical arts:

It is not much to the credit of our farmers when we reflect that, in 1754, we exported, and in 1890 we import beef and pork and vegetables and dairy products.

Doubtless, within a few years, these things will change, and we look for help from the students of this and other colleges; men who are willing to work and to think, to labor and to toil. For every farmer in North Carolina there is room for a thousand more; and for every mill now in operation hundreds could be built, and yet our water-power would not be exhausted. The circle of our responsibility is widening each year. A year ago it was with the trustees; to-day it is shared by faculty and students, and all are aware that the future usefulness of the college depends, to a great extent, on the impression created by the students as they leave here.

Young gentlemen, by your work you shall be known. The faculty commend you as students and as honorable men. They will watch your course. The trustees will watch it, and the friends of the college throughout the State will watch it. One lesson you can teach by your labor and work—that is that you always stand ready to give good honest labor for value received—impressing on all with whom you come in contact that time is money, and he who fails to give a day's labor when he is paid for a full day—contradicts by his action the statement "an honest man is the noblest work of God."

I desire, in conclusion, to return thanks in behalf of the Board of Trustees to Mrs. Holladay and Mrs. Carroll and the ladies of Raleigh also, who always visit us at public occasions, for the care and refining influence bestowed on "our boys," and to the faculty, for their labors in behalf of the students and college this year. Most of the faculty came to us as adopted sons from other States; they have proven themselves worthy of your confidence and esteem, and by their walk and conversation (particularly their conversation with some of Carolina's fair daughters) we have long since concluded that they say within themselves—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Mr. Sanderlin Absent.

Col. Holladay announced with regret that Rev. G. W. Sanderlin, State Auditor, who was expected to speak, was unwell. There was genuine regret for Dr. Sanderlin is a prime favorite with a Raleigh audience.

Capt. Ashe's Address.

Capt. S. A. Ashe was next introduced. Mr. Ashe spoke of the development of man in his relations to society until finally the period was reached when equality of manhood was recognized. This development started in England contemporaneously with her industrial development. The Black Death had in six short months swept away half the population of England—with the effect of making labor very scarce, which resulted first in leading the land owners to largely increase their pasture and flocks of sheep, and enabling the laborer to demand higher wages. This was the beginning of England's industrial greatness. She came the greatest manufacturing country of the world and has ever since maintained her proud eminence. Others have followed her example and now with teeming population, the industrial age has been reached, with the people asserting their full manhood, and seeking new lives in new fields. Thus has come fierce competition between communities. 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